In this kind of Writing we are, it must be confessed, in Great Britain, inferior to the French. We neither relate so agreeably, nor draw characters with so much delicacy; yet we are not without some performances which discover the strength of the British genius. No fiction, in any language, was ever better supported than the *Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. While it is carried on with that appearance of truth and simplicity, which takes a strong hold of the imagination of all Readers, it suggests, at the same time, very useful instruction; by showing how much the native powers of man may be exerted for surmounting the difficulties of any external situation. Mr Fielding's Novels are highly distinguished for their humour; a humour which, if not of the most refined and delicate kind, is original, and peculiar to himself. The characters which he draws are lively and natural, and marked with the strokes of a bold pencil. The general scope of his stories is favourable to humanity and goodness of heart; and in *Tom Jones*, his greatest work, the artful conduct of the fable, and the subserviency of all the incidents to the winding up of the whole, deserve much praise. The most moral of all our novel Writers is Richardson, the Author of *Clarissa*, a Writer of excellent intentions, and of very considerable capacity and genius, did he not possess the unfortunate talent of spinning out pieces of amusement into an immeasurable length. The trivial performances which daily appear in public under the title of Lives, Adventures, and Histories, by anonymous Authors, if they be often innocent, yet are most commonly insipid; and, though in the general it ought to be admitted that Characteristical Novels, formed upon Nature and upon Life, without extravagance, and without licentiousness, might furnish an agreeable and useful entertainment to the mind; yet according as these Writings have been, for the most part, conducted, it must also be confessed, that they oftener tend to dissipation and idleness, than to any good purpose. Let us now therefore make our retreat from these regions of fiction.